

CONNECT WITH YOU!!

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE IN THE HOME!



Connections In The Home Newsletter

Autumn 2015

From us.....

Wow....it is hard to believe that we are heading into the cooler months already after such a fantastic summer. This only brings more reason to wrap up warm and enjoy some fun winter activities.

We'd like to welcome the new families and educators that have joined our 'team' over the last few months...we are really looking forward to working alongside you and our journey ahead.

We have focused on a fun programme of events and professional development for the upcoming term (5 year). Mark you calendars with these dates...We hope that you all enjoy the term just as much as we will!

If you have any questions or feedback we would love to hear from you!

Snuggly regards!

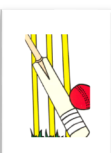
Sarah & Vicki



Up and Coming events...

Friday 3rd—Monday 6th April—Easter Break
Monday 6th—Friday 17th April—School Holidays

Monday 20th April—Term 2 begins
Monday 20th April—**Magic Mat Time** resumes



Tuesday 21st April—**Action Indoor Sport's Session**

A fun morning of indoor games :)
9.30am—30 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga

Wednesday 22nd April—**Toddlerock** begins again!

Thursday 23rd April—**Crazy Craft** resumes
Matt from our local Fire Department is visiting us to chat to the children....then we will be booking a visit from the Fire Truck to follow later in the term!



Friday 24th April—**Little Kickers** resumes



Saturday 25th April—**ANZAC Day**
Monday 27th April—**ANZAC Day Public Holiday**

Okahu Bay School Holiday Outing

Bring along the family and lets get together!
Wednesday 15th April—from 9.30am

Educator Movie Evening—'Age of Adaline'

Wednesday 15th April @ 8pm

Tax Evening (with the IRD) for Educators

Wednesday 22nd April at 7-9pm

Plunket Car Seat Safety Check

Thursday 30th April during Crazy Craft

Dates to be confirmed:
Kids Music Company PD—evening session for Educators
Child Protection Evening Workshop
Civil Defence Evening for Educators



Contact Us



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Our Team

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Magic Mat Time Crazy Craft!

Monday's – 9.30 am till 11.00 am

Connections Cottage – 1/34 Cook St, Howick

Designed to incorporate music, stories and fun our Magic Mat Time offers an opportunity for the children to experience:

Music & Dance – Gross Motor Development

Instruments and Props – Exploration

Bubbles, Balloons, Parachute and Lycra – Fun!

Mixing with others....Social Development

Story time...Language development, culture, listening skills...plenty of skills needed for school years too!

Shared Morning Tea - bring along a piece of fruit and we supply the biscuits...more opportunity for social development



Thursday's – 9.30 am till 11.00 am

Bell House, Bell Rd, Lloyd Elmore, Pakuranga

(right next to the Howick Historical Village)

Join us for some creative fun both indoors and outdoors. The stunning setting allows for beautiful picnics out in the gardens, plenty of space to run and play and the cottage for arts & crafts, baking, dress ups, dramatic play, playdough, easels, and a special 'space' dedicated to our younger babies in the group where they can enjoy heuristic play with our 'Treasure Basket' resources.

All of the children will benefit from this group through social and physical development (fine motor and gross motors skills). Our 'Transition to School' thread during this session offers the older children opportunity for self-care skills to be developed, fine motor skills (tripod grip, scissor skills (supervised of course!)), pre writing development, name recognition, pasting (they will need this skill in the classroom) and plenty of hands on experiences.

Above all...the children (and Educators) have plenty of FUN in their play!



Toddlerock!

Wednesday's – 10 am

C3 Church, 27 Aviemore Dr, Highland Park

Toddlerock is a pre-school music and movement group. It provides a great opportunity for kids of pre-school age to come along and have some fun with singing and dancing and make new friends.

Although we cannot take the praise for this event we do support it and many of our Educators and children are regulars each week!

The wonderful Mel Easton and her team facilitate this fun session and all are welcome J

There is a donation of \$3 per family/educator and this includes morning tea.

Little Kickers



Friday Mornings

Confidence, control, being part of team, fresh air, and FUN!

We offer a football session for preschoolers run by the Little Kickers team – free of charge to our little charges!

Gross motor & social development, following instructions and learning alongside others.

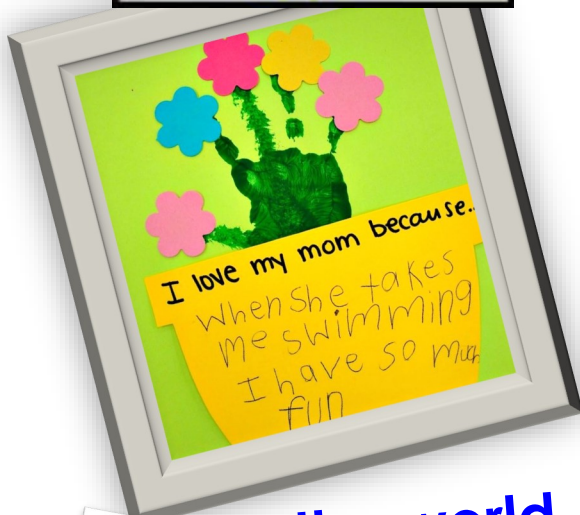


Toddlerock Howick

IDEAS & INSPIRATION...

Mother's Day

Sunday 10th May



Welcome to the world...



Congratulations to **Anita Gill**, In Home Educator, on the safe arrival of your healthy wee man **Jericho**!

An extra special 'mummy's day' this year for you!

We are really looking forward to getting to know Jericho in the years ahead :)

'Bubbling Bath Salts'

These **Bubbling Bath Salts** are a fantastic gift idea for Mummy's and/or Grandmas too!



Homemade
Bubbling
Bath Salts

Scent them with any essential oil (optional) and complimenting body wash. Change the colour to match the season or occasion....lavender or vanilla are always a nice choice. Make a few extra jars at a time to have Homemade Gifts on hand!

Ingredients:

- 6 Cups Kosher or Epsom Salt
- ¼ Cup Lavender Scented Body Wash
- 1 tbsp Olive, Coconut, or Sweet Almond Oil
- 2-3 Drops Lavender Essential Oil (Optional)
- Purple Food Colouring (or colour of choice - Optional)

Directions:

- In a large bowl, combine salt and body wash, and mix until well combined.
- Add in your oil, essential oil and food colouring and mix well.
- On a lined baking sheet, spread the salt mixture out into a thin layer. Allow to dry for 24 hours.
- Once dry, break up any large clumps, and spoon into a sealable jar.

To Use: Add ¼ Cup of Bubbly Bath Salts under running water...and enjoy!

Autumn Craft Ideas....



We wanted to share with you one of our favourite readings taken from Pennie Brownlee's website.

It is an article that has always inspired us in all that we do, in how we speak to our children...and in designing our programme. May you enjoy the read too!

Wonder fuels a love affair

Keeping the wonder alive as our children develop their love affair with Life

Here is a paradox worth exploring if we are to enjoy this planet and grow in our sense of belonging: it is all ordinary, and at the same time, it is all extraordinary. Now I know this paradox applies to information technology, to numeracy and to literacy, it has to, simply because it *is* all ordinary and extraordinary. I, however, want to go back to basics. It's logical, if you don't have a good grounding in the basics, what follows can be very precarious.

Basically, we are a part of the biosphere of this planet. As far as we know, we are the one species which, as a part of the creation, can reflect on and wonder at the creative process, that is, the Life on this planet. For adults, it is in the reflection and the wondering that the extraordinary is revealed.

Take rain for example. Most of us have been heard to moan about the rain. That's us responding in our 'most ordinary mode'. In our 'extraordinary mode' we will wonder at the moisture in this Earth's finite water system being evaporated into vapour, vapour gathering in the sky and returning to earth to keep gardens watered and plants growing. And this cycle goes on eternally. Now that is pretty extraordinary. Will we wonder out loud with our children? Will we stay in appreciation when it rains because we know our lives depend on it?

Children wonder at the rain. They wonder with their bodies and their senses. They play in it, they catch it in their hands or on their tongues. If we let them. So why don't we let them more often, do we really have good reasons for curbing their love affair with rain? Or is it that we have lost our sense of wonder?

Babies are natural scientists and 'wonderers'. They wonder about everything, but not with their minds the way we do, their minds are in the very early stages of formation. Infants and toddlers wonder with their bodies and their senses.

We can join them at that sensory level, being very present, in-the-moment, wondering, noticing and matching their intentness they explore. Intuition is the most reliable guide over when to say silent, when to speak and when to wonder out loud. To be sure, children need us to wonder out loud. How else will they grow their vocabulary? How else will they learn that the cicada has spent years under the ground before crawling to the surface, 'birthing' itself from its skeleton, and then flying and singing for the first time?



We'll also need to be quiet enough to see that this ordinary old cicada 'shell' is quite extraordinary. With the child, we'll both silently notice it has dirt on its forelegs, it has a long straw for a mouth. There is a split in the shell, the very place that it extracted itself from. And we won't

tell the child any of this, but we could ponder out loud after we had noticed:

I wonder what that's for? I wonder how that got there?

Answers aren't important, it's the right question that allows us to enter more deeply the mystery of ordinary-extraordinary. The right question doesn't have a right answer. The right question generates more wondering and pondering. The wondering is very focused, it is actually a meditative state. Brainwave patterns change, and you and the child enter a focused peace together, a resonance. Wonder full.

Like any love affair, wondering takes time - a love affair with the rain, with the cicadas, with your family, with Life - it all takes time. Great. That's what we are here for and we've got plenty of time. All this talk about not enough time and too busy shows how badly we neglect the basics in our culture. Too busy doing what? As Goethe noted, "Things that matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least".

Wondering is a non-judgemental state. In the act of wondering you don't judge, you just notice. There is no 'good' or 'bad', it just is. So snails aren't bad, snails are simply snails, ordinary and at the same time, extraordinary. The way we speak about and behave with snails can grow wonder, and it can also dismiss wonder and even kill it:

They're just snails.

Yuk slime. Get them out of here at once.

We'll poison them.

Aargh! Squash them. Now.

The toddler who was fascinated with how the snail moved, amazed by the iridescent trail, intrigued with the retractable 'horn-eyes', in awe of how it could all fit back in its shell-house now ends his love affair with the part of Life called snail.

What then is our role in keeping the wonder alive? Two thousand years ago we were given a clue, "Except you become as little children you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven". Whatever other levels of meaning this quote carries, it is also about the love affair children have for Life on this planet. Children are curious, they explore, seeing freshly with non-judgemental eyes. They are already in heaven, here, on earth. And how do we encourage this?

- **We have to go outside**

Make provision for lots more outside time together. You need to be outside to lie on the grass and wonder about the clouds. Daisies, slater-bugs, sparrows - these extraordinary things live outside.

- **Stop watching the clock and start seeing**

In the long run, does it really matter if you are late for lunch because you were in the middle of watching a blackbird pulling, pulling, and persistently pulling her lunch from the lawn?



- **Start watching for and weeding out judgements**

Take the tiny scarlet pimpernel flower and the buttercup, these are known as weeds and treated accordingly, yet each is as ordinary and as extraordinary as a lotus or an orchid - if you stop judging. The Teton-Lakota people do not even have a word for weed, there is no such thing.

- **Look small**

Truly, an ant, a cockroach or a stick insect is just as amazing as a giraffe or a jaguar, just smaller - and easier to get to spend time with and getting to know.

- **Watch what we say**

Our words can encourage wonder and love for Life, or they can kill it stone dead.

- **Get yourself a personal trainer**

Probably the best qualified mentors I know are children. Infants and young toddlers model to you how to relax, take time and concentrate on your wondering. I've observed they have a far longer attention span for concentrating and exploring single-mindedly than many adults. When it comes to a mentor on questioning you can't go past a child. Children ask the best questions, decent juicy pondering questions like - "Well, how does the moon make the tide come in?" and "How does the baby get in there?"

- **Save your money**

Basics don't cost anything. You don't fundraise for a visit to make a daisy chain or to make mud pies. It costs nothing to find a fairy toothbrush or to lie on a newly mown lawn. Your 'consultant' will not charge you the earth when she asks "what makes the grass smell?" and "why is one cloud white and that other one black?"

Between the two of you, in your love affair with Life, you'll be growing curiosity and belonging, intelligence and understanding and you will be keeping the spirit of wonder very much alive. That's very ordinary and paradoxically, most extraordinary.

Pennie Brownlee

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For more of Pennie's articles visit her website:

<http://penniebrownlee.weebly.com/>